

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 260552Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 842

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJ: ELECTION CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENTS

1. SEPT 23 PRIMIN DEMIREL LAUNCHED HIS CAMPAIGNING FOR JUSTICE PARTY (JP) CANDIDATES IN THE OCTOBER 12 PARTIAL SENATE ELECTION IN A SPEECH AT A SMALL VILLAGE ABOUT FIFTY MILES WEST OF ANKARA. BY INAUGURATING HIS CAMPAIGN IN A VILLAGE, DEMIREL UNDERLINED WHAT WILL APPARENTLY BE THE MAIN THEMES OF HIS CAMPAIGN:

A. THAT DEMIREL AND THE JP KNOW THE VILLAGE AND THE RECORD SHOWS THEY HAVE WORKED TO IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS OF VILLAGE LIFE. THAT THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLES PARTY (RPP) PROFESSES INTEREST BUT HAS DONE NOTHING.

B. THAT THE RPP IS THE PARTY OF DISCORD, NOT PROGRESS, AND IT ISN THE CAPTIVE OF THE RADICAL LEFT.

2. DEMIREL'S SPEECH WAS MADE BEFORE A FRIENDLY CROWD OF ABOUT 1,000, MOST OF WHOM WERE FROM ANKARA ALTHOUGH THE VILLAGE (WHICH WAS SOLIDLY IN JP CAMP IN 1973 ELECTIONS) WAS

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ASLO OUT IN FORCE. HIS SPEECH, PRAISING PAST JP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AND ATTACKING RPP FAILURES, WAS DESIGNED TO PROVOKE AUDIENCE RESPONSE. HOWEVER, EMBOFF ATTENDING RALLY WAS STRUCK BY FACT THAT DEMIREL, AS IN 1973, WAS UNABLE TO GENERATE EMOTIONAL REACTION FROM A PRIMED AND RECEPTIVE AUDIENCE. DURING HIS FORTY-FIVE MINUTE SPEECH, THE CROWD BECAME INCREASINLY LESS ATTENTIVE AND BY THE END PERHAPS TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT HAD DRIFTED AWAY. THE GREATEST AUDIENCE RESPONSE OCCURRED PRIOR TO DEMIREL'S SPEECH WHEN MUTLU MENDERES, SON OF EXECUTED PRIME MINISTER ADNAN MENDERES, AND NEWLY INDUCTED MEMBER OF THE JP, WAS INTRODUCED.

3. DURING THE PAST WEEK RPP LEADER ECEVIT CARRIED HIS CAMPAIGN TO THE BLACK SEA COAST. SPEAKING TO WELL-ORGANIZED RALLIES IN ALL MAJOR TOWN ALONG THE COAST, ECEVIT CONTINUED TO ATTACK THE DEMIREL GOVT ON THE ISSUE OF ALLEGED CORRUPTION. FOR THE FIRST TIME, HOWEVER, ECEVIT INTRODUCED FOREIGN POLICY INTO THE CAMPAIGN BY CRITICIZING DEMIREL'S HANDLING OF THE CYPRUS ISSUE (ANKARA 7185). EMBOFF ATTENDED A MAJOR RALLY IN THE CITY OF TRABZON SEPT 18. THE 5,000 TO 10,000 SPECTATORS, FOR THE MOST PART MORE CURIOUS THAN PARTISAN, RESPONDED ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO ECEVIT'S DISCUSSION OF CYPRUS, BUT LISTENED QUIETLY TO THE REST OF HIS SPEECH.

4. COMMENT: ECEVIT BEGAN CAMPAIGNING EARLIER THAN DEMIREL. ALTHOUGH HE HAS NOT RPT NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO REVIVE THE CHARISMATIC IMAGE HE POSSESSED IN 1973, HIS CAMPAIGN HAS A MEMENTUM WHICH DEMIREL WILL BE HARD-PRESSED TO INTERRUPT OR DUPLICATE. ERBAKAN AND HIS NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) ALSO STARTED EARLY BUT THEY SEEM TO BE HAVING EVEN MORE DIFFICULTY GETTING THEIR CAMPAIGN OFF THE GROUND. IT IS OF COURSE MUCH TOO EARLY TO MAKE SPECIFIC PROJECTIONS, BUT PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS, BASED ON OBSERVATIONS OF THREE EMBOFFS WHO DURING THE PAST WEEK ATTENDED RALLIES AND SPOKE TO LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS IN SIX PROVINCES ON THE BLACK SEA COAST AND IN CENTRAL ANATOLIA, SUGGEST THAT THE RPP IS DOING WELL, BUT NOT AS WELL AS ITS LEADERS HAD HOPED, THE JP IS STARTING SLOWLY, BUT PROBBLY DOING AS WELL AS IT DID IN 1973; AND THE NSP IS NOT MAKING THE DRAMATIC GAINS ITS LEADER HAS PREDICTED. MACOMBER

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